



Kelly Cresswell <kcresswell@safmt.org>
SENATE EDUCATION

Exhibit No. 4

Date 2/18/15

Bill No. SB 328

Wed, Feb 18, 2015 at 10:07 AM

SB328

Sheila Stearns <sheila@modwest.com>

Reply-To: sheila@modwest.com

To: Kelly Cresswell <kcresswell@safmt.org>

Please forward or deliver my comments to Senator Jones for addition to the testimony in favor of SB 328:

February 18, 2015

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I strongly support Senator Jones' bill to initiate college savings accounts at a micro-level for every newborn in Montana. Nothing could send a stronger message for every family that our state has high hopes for the educational future of all children, and high expectations for their future careers in a 21st century economy. With lower college debt-stress, more of these Montana kids can eventually stay in Montana in career fields much needed by our state.

I think of it as almost literally planting tiny seeds, like thousands of acorns that will grow into a mighty forest of oak trees in 20 years. The confidence of families and their children as they themselves add to the college funds that have been jump-started for them will give us a forest we can be proud of, even well before 18 to 20 years have passed.

Congratulations on a great concept! I urge a do-pass on this small but ultimately enormous, leveraged investment in the future of Montana families and kids.

Sheila M. Stearns
Commissioner Emeritus
Montana University System